

Dorchester County Support Visit

March 28, 2014

Schools visited:

Hurlock Elementary School and North Dorchester High School

Central Office Participation:

Central office administrators representing numerous offices participated in the visit throughout the day. In the morning central office administrators representing Elementary and Secondary English Language Arts, World Language, Secondary Education, Elementary and Secondary Mathematics, Science and STEM, Social Studies, Special Education, ELL and College and Career Readiness, New Teacher , and the Local Accountability Coordinator joined the conversation. Dr. Henry Wagner, Superintendent, also participated in the visit. Dr. Lorenzo Hughes, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, was available throughout the visit to answer questions, and facilitate this visit.

Teacher and Principal Participation:

In the morning, central office administrators and classroom teachers met briefly to share information about their transition. After visiting the high school classrooms, teachers met with us to share information; after visiting elementary school classrooms, teachers shared insights and information.

Summary of MSDE resources central office and school personnel felt was **most useful** in transitioning to the Maryland College and Career Standards (MCCRS):

- Dorchester County Public Schools contracted with content experts in Mathematics and ELA to help them create curriculum and provide appropriate professional development to educators as they implement the Maryland College and Career Standards.
- They were not fully aware of the resources available on MSDE Blackboard Learn. They relied on resources from North Carolina and New York. An overview of Blackboard Learn was provided to the Central Office staff members.
- Include Special Education teachers in professional development offerings
- In ELA, they are developing PARCC type assessments with Talbot County Public Schools and Eastern Shore 9
- ELL has done more pull in rather than push out – very successful

- ELA concentrating on two initiatives: Rigor and Cooperative Learning. Conducted school wide book studies before bring in Kagan for workshops.
- Layering in additional writing with county-wide prompts to be used with 6 Traits Writing
- Elementary Mathematics sees a challenge in the gap years. Eastern Shore 9 uses the same elementary math benchmarks. Have initiated a term framework for math and exit tickets.
- Performance Matters has helped track progress across a standard
- Teachers took the mathematics PARCC assessment Sample Items
- Have used the EQUIP Rubric
- Instructional coaches are key:
 - Title 1 elementary schools have one mathematics and one ELA coach
 - Other elementary schools have one coach for both contents
 - Secondary schools have one coach for both contents

Summary of resources district and school personnel stated they **would like from MSDE:**

- Videos of Maryland educators implementing the new standards (short, focused videos, such as a lesson on teaching fractions) – content based
- Feedback on the benchmarks they have created
- More primary writing resources for primary and intermediate – basal program not enough
- Help with unpacking standards
- Break down the important vocabulary, deeper level questions, alternate activities
- Link for public domain text site that includes Lexile levels, nonfiction literacy and current events - NewsELA 3-5 (https://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&aq=&oq=newela&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1T4MXGB_enUS520US520&q=newsela&gs_l=hp..0.0i10i5.0.0.0.4918.....0.XxVYkfH659U)
- Assistance with the integration of mathematics
- Clarity on how the MCCRS works for special education and gifted and talented students
 - How to plan for very diverse groups
 - Assistive technology
- UDL at the HS level
- Mathematics and ELA – arithmetic and writing skills are weak

Summary of **professional development opportunities** district and school personnel would like MSDE to facilitate:

- PD that provides deep contextual and global knowledge of Mathematics and ELA Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards before writing lesson plans or seeds
- More UDL offerings and resources – Webinars, face to face, etc.
- Shift from teacher directed instruction to teacher-facilitated instruction
- Opportunities to talk with other counties based on topics or subjects of concern
- More exposure to MSDE Blackboard Learn
- Addressing the gap years
- Changing the paradigm shift in teaching – not discourse
- PD for writing in all content areas
- PD for teachers working with autistic students, gifted, Special Education
- How to implement STEM and Disciplinary Literacy and cover everything else

Key Messages from Dorchester County:

- Time is a challenge; changes in curriculum, accountability, and concern over TPE are overwhelming
- They could not wait for MSDE to provide resources and PD so they forged ahead alone or with other Eastern Shore districts
- Central office educators have a good grasp on student and teacher needs. All professional development is designed to target these needs.
- Central office educators and school-based educators work together closely and this continues to be a strength
- There is a misunderstanding by some of the teachers as how to incorporate strategies related to Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, STEM Standards of Practice, and Disciplinary Literacy Practices into non-ELA or non-Math content areas
- Dorchester has moved forward to create their own PARCC-like literacy and mathematics tasks and materials
 - Using benchmarks from Eastern Shore nine
 - Hold monthly PD sessions to look at benchmark and unit assessments
- Dorchester has hired consultants to provide PD that helps move them forward in the implementation of MCCRS

- They request that MSDE lesson writing sessions include a global context of the alignment and direction of standards prior to attacking the writing. Previous PD sessions did not include the opportunities to dig deep into the standards to develop a thorough understanding of “how it all fits.”